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# WILLIAMSBURG LODGE OF MASONS

There was recently returned to Williamsburg from the Library of Congress, by authority of a joint resolution of Congress, dated April 19, 1916, an old volume of the minutes of the Williamburg Lodge of Masons, running five years from the day of the Feast of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 5774 (profanely 1774) to June 24, 5779, inclusive. A pencil jotting on one of the leaves "Lancaster City, Penn^a, Oct. 27, 1865" probably shows that the Library got possession of it from a person in that quarter, who carried it off from Williamsburg during the war.

In 1892 some account was given in this magazine of the early history of Williamsburg Lodge,[1] and this old book affords some further light. The charter of November 6, 5774 is given in full, and is shown to have been granted by command of Robert Edward Petre, Lord Petre, Baron of Writtle in the County of Essex, England, grand master of Masons in England. It was witnessed by D. G. M. Charles Dillon and G. S. James Hesseltine. It appointed Peyton Randolph as Master, John Minson Galt Senior Warden and Edward Charlton, Junior Warden for opening the Lodge.

The first meeting recorded in this book is one held June 24, 1774, on the feast day of St. John the Baptist. John Minson Galt[2] presided, and the accounts of John Turner as treasurer for the past year were examined, and a balance found in his hands of

[1] Quarterly I, 1-34.

[2] He was a surgeon in charge of the sick soldiers in Williamsburg, Va., during the Revolution. Educated at William and Mary College and at Edinburgh and Paris.

thirteen pounds, sixteen shillings & six pence. For the ensuing year John Blair was made Master, William Waddill Deputy Master, William Finnie, Senior Warden, Harrison Randolph, Junior Warden, John Rowsay, Treasurer, William Russell, Secretary, and Humphrey Harwood and James Galt, Stewards. The same day brother Gabriel Maupin was paid 20 pds for the use of his house as a lodge for the last year, and the officers of the Lodge were constituted a committee to draw up a set of regulations.

August 2, 5774 (1774) the committee of the Lodge were required to prepare a petition to the next House of Burgesses for permission to hold a lottery to raise money for building a lodge room[1] and "other conveniences for the same."

Oct. 4, 5774, Edmund Randolph was requested to revise the laws of the Lodge.

October 5, 5774. "The design of this meeting being to lay the Foundation Stone of the stone Bridge to be built at the Capitol Landing, the Lodge accordingly Repaired thereto, and after the usual Libations & having placed a Medal under the corner stone and laid the same in due form closed the Lodge. The inscription of which medal is as follows:

Georgio Tertio Rege
Comite Dunmore Praefecto
Peyton Randolph Latomorum praeside Supremo
Johanne Blair Praeside A. L. 5774."

15 December, 5774. Present Peyton Randolph G. M., John Blair D. G. M., William Waddill D. M., William Finnie S. W., Edmund Randolph J. W. Pro., John Rowsay Treas., William Russell Sect., Hum: Harwood & James Galt Stew[ts], John Minson Galt P. M. Measures were taken for a Ball to be held with the permission of his Excellency the Governor (Dunmore), who was to be invited, at the Capitol Building. Brother Maupin was to provide the entertainment on "most frugal terms," and the officers of the Lodge were to be a committee of supervision.

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[1] The lodge was built on Francis Street, near the powder magazine. It was pulled down only a short time ago. (See picture in "History of Williamsburg," by Tyler, pp. 244-247.)

Dec. 22, 5774. James Hubard, James McClurg, and James Madison were passed to the degree of a Fellow craft and afterwards raised to the degree of Master Mason.

June 16, 5775. "On the Petition of Brother Peal, desiring the loan of the picture belonging to this Lodge which was taken for our worshipful Prov. Grand Master, the same was granted him upon his giving surety for the safe return of the same at the appointed time."

Nov. 6, 1775. "Ordered that this Lodge go into mourning for our Late Worthy Grand Master[1] and continue till his corps shall arrive and that this Lodge attend in procession and that the order be published in the Virginia Gazette."

December 21, 1775. Brother Rind's children to be supported by this Lodge and a committee of charity appointed. Brother Wm. Peale to be wrote to return the Speaker's Picture.

December 27, 5775. "Ordered that the Lodge return their thanks for the present made the Lodge by Mrs. Randolph (Provincial Grand Master's juel, sash and apron.)"

Ordered that "the charge delivered by Brother Bland (Rev. William Bland) be recorded." His concluding words were: "But wherefore was I about to draw the Character of a true Mason? For not long since you had a bright Exempler to imitate and admire. Surely I am not called upon for his name, for surely it can never be forgotten. All North America was under his wing, but we his peculiar Care. Write a Virtue which he had not faithfully transcribed into his Practice, or enumerate an Excellence to which his Heart was a stranger. If malice could be found within these walls, she would be silenced by the contemplation of his Memory, and Envy herself bear no Fangs against him. That great Man — great let me call him—revived the drooping Spirit of Masonry. The few remaining of the Elect he concentred in this place, and to him must be ascribed the present numerous appearance of Brethren. I would dwell, forever dwell, on the Remembrance of him, but I fear that my Short acquaintance with the

[1] Peyton Randolph, Provincial Grand Master, died at Philadelphia, October 22, 1775. He was the first President of the Continental Congress.

Sublimer Parts of Masonry prevents me from doing Justice to him. We all well know how Gracefully he filled that Chair, and I congratulate M. B. that we once had such a head and such a Father."

Jany 2d 5776. The Lodge takes under its care Brother (William) Rind's[1] two eldest Boys.

Oct. 1, 5776. Doctor Rickman Rented the low Rooms of the Lodge from the 1st of September at twenty pounds per annum.

November 26, 5776. "Present William Waddill M., John Rowsay S. W., John Dixon J. W., Jas. Galt T., William Finnie S. P. T., James Slate & Will Nicholson Stewarts, William Bland, John Galt, Humphrey Harwood, Jas. Douglas, A. Williamson, A. Diddip, P. Moody, B. Bucktrout, F. Bickerton, Jas. McClurg, Will Johnson, Charles Ferguson, Jas Wood, George Reid, Jas Kemp, John Clarkson, Edwd Ervin & Gabriel Maupin, met and agreed on the form of the procession of our late worthy Brother Peyton Randolph Grand Master of Virginia, Deceased, and then repaired to the Colledge Chappel, after the corps was Interr'd, returned to the Lodge and adjourned till a Lodge in course."

Dec. 3, 5776. "On motion that Brother Davis be desired to preach on Saint John's (Day) and Brother Bland read prayers, and we dine and Sup and have a Ball for the entertainment of the Ladies at the house of Mrs. Campbell as usual heretofore. Ordered that Ticketts be prepared by the Treasurer and delivered and at five dollars to all Regular made Masons."

"On a motion made Resolved that the Master of this Lodge (William Waddill) be directed to write to all the regular Lodges in this State, requesting their attendance by their deputies at this Lodge in order to form a convention to choose a Grand Master for the State of Virginia on the first day of the next Assembly."

Dec. 17, 5776. The Ball called off on account of the critical times and that tickets be issued to all regular made Masons at 12 and 6 pence each for the Dinner on St. John's Day, to be prepared by Brother Maupin.

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[1] William Rind was editor of one of the *Virginia Gazettes* published in Williamsburg at this time.

April 1, 5777. "On a Motion Resolved that the present officers are appointed to meet the deputies from the other Lodges."

May 6, 5777. "On a motion Resolved that a committee be appointed to consist of Brother J. M. Galt, bros. Edmund Randolph, Bland, Rowsay and Waddill to consider & Give an answer to the Letters received from the different Lodges in answer to one from the Master of this Lodge in consequence of a Resolution of this Lodge on the 3d of December, 1776."

June 3, 5777. "On a motion Resolved that the Master & wardens-elect, William Finnie, Doctor James McClurg and J. M. Galt, be added to the former Deputation appointed by this Lodge to meet in Convention of the Craft on the 23d Instant agreeable to a Requisition of the Craft held the 13th of May last."

"On a motion Resolved the Ceiling of the Lodge be removed & an arched ceiling Turned in its place & blinds be made to the windows for the admission of fresh and cool air."

"On a motion Resolved that there be an elegant Frame made to the Picture of our Late Worthy and Honble Provincial G. M. & that the Treasurer be appointed to Employ some person to make it." [1]

"Feast of St. John the Baptist 5777 (June 24?)

On motion made and seconded (by?) Brother Edd Randolph Tis ordered that Brother Bucktrout do hand about a Subscription among the Brotherhood for the purpose of collecting a sum of Money to be laid out in an organ for the use of this Lodge and that he report his success at the next lodge in course."

"The worshipful Junior Warden recommended Major John Allison, seconded by Brother Gibson; Brother Gibson recommended Captain Windsor Brown & William Payne, seconded by the W. J. W. The W. J. W. recommended Lieut. John Sheild seconded by the Brother Treasurer as proper persons to be initiated in the mysteries of Masonry, who were each and Severally Ballotted for and Accepted (being transient Persons) and regularly made Entered Apprentices."

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[1] See an account of this painting by Peale, QUARTERLY I, p. 7.

"Brother Edmund Randolph discontinued himself a member of this Lodge."

July 1, 5777. "The Right Worshipful Master (William Finnie)[1] presented a letter to the Lodge from the Convention of Five Lodges assembled in the Lodge Room of the City of Williamsburg on the 23d of June last pursuant to an adjournment of the Deputys assembled in the said Lodge Room of the City of Williamsburg on the 13th of May last and agreeable to their invitation to the several regular Lodges of this State was delivered to the Secretary, by him read, and on the motion of the Worshipful Junior Warden ordered to be recorded." (But no record was made).

December 6, 5777. "On a motion Resolved that this Lodge do meet on the Feast of St. John, the Evangelist, next ensuing and proceed in procession to Church to hear Divine Service and a Sermon, that the worshipful Junior Warden do bespeak a supper on the occasion, that the Ladies in Town be invited as usual to spend the evening in Harmony. A committee of the officers & Past officers do meet and agree upon a plan to regulate the proceedings of the Evening.

Brother James Galt protested against the proceedings Relative to the Ball in the evening, but assigned no Reasons."

August 4, 5778. Robert Andrews[2] Master, John M. Galt S. W., Humphrey Harwood, J. W., James Galt Treas., Leighton Wood Jr., Secry.

"This being the first Lodge that hath been held since receiving the melancholy account of our late worthy Brother's death Major Edmund B. Dickenson, who gloriously fell in defence of our Civil Rights and Liberties, It is Resolved that the usual Ceremonies indicating Joy and Pleasure be omitted for the present Evening."

October 6, 5778. "On a Motion made It is ordered that Brothers Robert Andrews, John Blair, William Waddill, William

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[1] Col. William Finnie was Adjutant Quarter Master General of Virginia during the Revolution.

[2] Robert Andrews, professor of Moral Philosophy in the College, and in 1784 professor of Mathematics.

Finnie, James McClurg, Humphrey Harwood and John Minson Galt, or any three of them, attend the Convention of deputies appointed to meet the 13th instant to Choose a Grand Master."

December 28, 5778 "Present The Honorable John Blair, Esq. Grand Master, Robert Andrews Master, John Minson Galt S. W., Humphrey Harwood J. W., James Galt Treas., Leighton Wood, Jun. Secry. William Finnie P. M., John Rowsay P. S. W., John Dixon P. J. W., William Goodson and George Reid P. Secrys. James Douglas and Mathew Anderson—Stewards, Revd James Madison Chaplain. Richard Charlton, Philip Moody, Archibald Williamson, James Slate, Benjamin Bucktrout, James Innes, John Clarkson, Henry Tazewell, David Morton, Nicholas George Moeballe, David Lowe, Foster Webb, Thomas Smith, George Chamberlayne, William Nicholson, John Farquharson, Gabriel Maupin, Beverley Randolph, James Southall, Samuel Beall, Joseph Hay, William Hickman, Charles D'Klauman, David Mann, Charles Edwd Ferguson, Thomas Russell & William Bland. Visiting Brethren Philip Mazzei[1] and John Lockley."

"This Lodge being held pursuant to former Resolutions passed for celebrating the high Feast of St. John the Evangelist and for the purpose of meeting in order to go in Procession to Church, the Brethren accordingly went, when after divine service a solemn charge suitable to the Occasion was delivered by the Reverend Brother Madison.

On return of the Brethren from Church it was Resolved that the Thanks of the Lodge be given to Brother Maddison for the excellent Charge this day delivered and also Ordered that the same be entered on the Records of this Lodge."

April 10, 5779. The Lodge resolves to attend the funeral of Brother Archibald Williamson by going in procession to the Church.

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[1] An Italian gentleman, who settled in Albemarle County just before the Revolution, to cultivate grapes. A letter written to him after his return to Italy, by Mr. Jefferson, became famous.

June 24, 5779, being the Feast of the Holy St. John, the Baptist. Present The Honourable John Blair, Esq.,[1] Grand Master, Robert Anderson Master &c.. The Lodge celebrated the day by the election of officers and proceeding to Brother Southall's [2] at six o'clock for supper.

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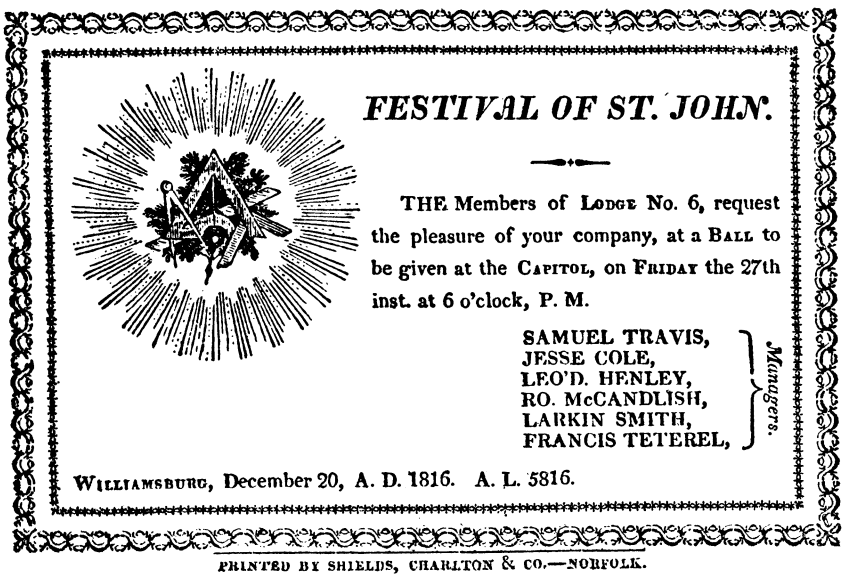
[1] John Blair, Past Master of Williamsburg Lodge, was made first Grand Master of the State October 13, 1778. He was son of John Blair, President of the Virginia Council. He was appointed by Washington Associate Justice of the United States. Born in 1732; died August 31, 1800.

[2] James Southall, who kept the Raleigh Tavern.



FESTIVAL OF ST. JOHN.

THE Members of LODGE No. 6, request the pleasure of your company, at a BALL to be given at the CAPITOL, on FRIDAY the 27th inst. at 6 o'clock, P. M.

SAMUEL TRAVIS,
JESSE COLE,
LEO'D. HENLEY,
RO. McCANDLISH,
LARKIN SMITH,
FRANCIS TETEREL,
} Managers.

WILLIAMSBURG, December 20, A. D. 1816. A. L. 5816.

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Invitation to a ball given by Williamsburg Lodge in honor of the Festival day of St. John, the Evangelist, December 27, A. D. 1816, A. L. 5816. From an original framed, and hanging on the walls of the Lodge room.